

Off The Fringe

Business briefs

Michaud resigns from Pebble

One month before the 2000 AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am and about six months before the U.S. Open, Mark Michaud resigned as superintendent of Pebble Beach Golf Links.

Michaud was at Pebble Beach for seven years and was reported to be looking for work on the East Coast.

Deere sues Toro

Moline, Ill.-based Deere & Co. is suing Bloomington, Minn.-based Toro Co. for allegedly infringing a patent for a turf cultivating machine. Deere claims that Toro and a distributor are illegally manufacturing and marketing aerators that use Deere's technology.

A Toro spokesman denied its competitor's allegation.

"We honor others patents and aggressively pursue our own," the spokesman told *Golfdom*. "As this suit goes forward, we're confident that Toro will prevail."

Toro rebounds in '99

Toro Co. reported that results for the year ending Oct. 31 rebounded over last year and are in line with expectations. Momentum from fiscal 1999 is expected to carry over into this year, the company said.

Net sales for the year were \$1.27 billion, compared to \$1.11 billion in 1998, an increase of 14.8 percent. Net income after restructuring and other unusual expenses was \$35.1 million compared to \$4.1 million in 1998.

"Toro rebounded solidly in fiscal 1999 with strong performances from our professional and residential business segments," said Kendrick B. Melrose, chairman and CEO.

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Mona at Six

HOW DOES GCSAA'S CEO EAT AN ELEPHANT? ONE BITE AT A TIME.

Editor's note: Publisher/Editor Pat Jones recently chatted with his former boss, GCSAA CEO Steve Mona. Jones, a former GCSAA director of public affairs, calls Mona "one of the best leaders I've ever known" and "the right person in the right job at the right time."

1. Does it really seem possible that you've been CEO of the association for six years? Has time flown or crawled?



The time has absolutely flown by. It doesn't feel at all like six years. That's because I thoroughly enjoy what I'm doing, and anytime that's the case, time is secondary. Secondly, the challenges we've had have been absorbing. Your sense of time disappears.

2. What were the big challenges you and your new team faced at the time?

The biggest thing was building trust. There were three dimensions to that challenge. First, building trust between the membership and the "administration." We were new, unknown quantities and the organization had been through a lot. Second, we had to build trust between staff and the executive leadership. Nobody knew each other, and there was

a lot of history. Finally, we had to establish trust between GCSAA and the other golf associations. The association had been pretty isolated within golf for a number of years.

3. What should the average member who hasn't visited the Lawrence headquarters know about the GCSAA staff that he or she probably wouldn't realize?

First, it's a dedicated group of people. Not all of our staff are golfers and they're certainly not superintendents, but they just seem to have an innate desire to do right by the members. They take on the challenges that our members face and they take them very personally.

Secondly, they would find a phenomenally well-educated group. My bachelor's degree sometimes makes me feel a little intimidated by comparison (to other staffers).

Finally, they are people that get the big picture and understand how their jobs relate to it. They're not working in a vacuum.

4. Of which accomplishments are you most proud over the past five years?

The biggest is increased recognition and respect for the individual superintendent. I can't say that any one specific thing has led to that or how much of it we can take credit for — and I really don't care. But it's irrefutable that we've made gains.

Second, there has been a large increase in the recognition and credi-

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bility of GCSAA itself. The only reason that's important is that if the organization has a good reputation within the golf community, our members benefit from it.

Finally, I'm proud of the establishment of a strong corporate culture here in Lawrence. In my mind, it's a culture of service.

5. What's your wish list for the next five years?

There are two overarching goals for between now and 2005. First, we want for the superintendent to be viewed as the key to the economic vitality of the

facility and the enjoyment of the game. Much of what we're doing supports that. The Professional Development Initiative is part of that. Our public relations program is part of that.

Second, we want the GCSAA to be viewed as one of golf's leading organizations in terms of importance to and influence on the game. We've made a conscious decision to move from being a golf course maintenance organization to a golf organization that has, at its heart, golf course maintenance.

There's an old saying that, "The rising tide raises all boats." If GCSAA as an organization has high credibility,

our members can go along for that ride. If a member can be viewed like a PGA member is today, then we've made it.

6. You're one of the best time managers I've ever met. What tips would you give to readers on making the most of every day?

I plan a week at a time. On Friday, I'll plan my whole next week's schedule. I know what I want to accomplish. From there, I take my daily schedule and break it into 30-minute segments. Then I put down specific and achievable items I want to accomplish in that 30 minutes. It's like the old saying, "How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time."

One little trick: I try to do one more thing than my schedule dictates — sign one more letter or whatever. It adds up over the course of the week.

7. Who inspires you?

On a general level, I'm inspired by the person with the big heart and not as much talent. The person with the positive attitude who really is out to make things better. Woody Allen said 80 percent of success is showing up. I like those people, too.

8. Do you still maintain and update a "written plan" for your life and career? If so, what's next after a long and successful tenure at GCSAA?

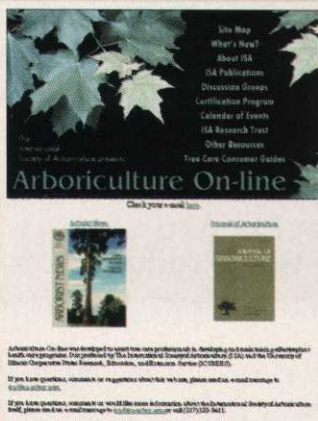
It (the plan) is a little looser today than it once was. Not because I'm any less interested in my career, but my goals right now are all about my children (two boys, 19 and 16, and a daughter, 13). All my focus is there. That's what I'm about when I'm not at the office.

I don't think much about my professional plan anymore because I'm enjoying myself so much here. It seems like the more you accomplish, the more you see there is to accomplish. It's a never-ending challenge. I want to continue to serve the game of golf and stay in association management. Then I think I'll be pretty happy.

Scanning the Web

When I play golf, I find myself in the trees far more often than I'd like, so I have a lot of time to wonder how superintendents keep them all healthy. Here are a few sites that will help us all figure that out (all sites start with <http://> unless otherwise noted):

***** — Bookmark it and return frequently; * — Look at only if absolutely necessary



*****www.isa-arbor.com — The official site of the International Society of Arboriculture provides both technical and general information about taking care of trees. Not only is it full of information, but it's easily navigable as well. It contains archived material from the *Journal of Arboriculture* and *Arborist News*, as well as discussion groups. This site is a great resource for all tree care information, but I have one quibble: The archives for the *Journal* only contain abstracts and don't give visitors any idea of how to get the full articles.

****www.natlarb.com — The National Arborist Association breaks its site into clear, targeted sections: consumers, professionals and general industry information. It has a click-through format that makes it easy to find what you're looking for, and there's plenty of information here. If you need to find an arborist in your area, this site has a search engine to help you.

**www.timbertree.com — This Stuart, Fla.-based tree care company will help you get basic information on tree care. It's a good site for beginners because it's thorough. It covers different stages of tree development, from the original planting through transplanting and offers tips on long-term care as well. It should answer the simplest tree-care questions.

Scanning the Web is compiled by Frank H. Andorka Jr., Golfdom's associate editor, who ducks each time he tries to hit a pitching wedge from behind a 60-foot oak. You may reach him at fandorka@advanstar.com with future column suggestions or sites you think he should visit.